

and I designate the hour beginning in each locality at 11 o'clock in the morning of that day as a time to unite in prayer. I urge the press, radio, television, and all other information media to cooperate in this observance.

I also request the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff during this Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and in all areas under its jurisdiction and control, and I request the people of the United States to display the flag at half-staff from their homes for the customary forenoon period.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

**William J. Clinton**

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on June 2.

### **Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia May 30, 1994**

Thank you very much, Mrs. McIntosh, for your fine introduction and for your service to our Nation in Asia during the Second World War. To you and your husband, Professor Shriner, who sang so well—I could imagine him at the age of 24 singing again; to Katy Daley; all the others here; and General Gordon; the distinguished leaders of our Armed Forces, the Congress, and the administration; to the leaders of the veterans' organizations present here; to all of you who are veterans and your families; my fellow Americans.

This morning we join, as we always do on this day, to honor the sacrifices that have made our Nation free and strong. All across our Nation, small towns are holding quiet Memorial Day ceremonies. Proud veterans are pinning on their medals. Children are lay-

ing wreaths. Men and women in uniform everywhere stand a little bit taller today as they salute the colors.

Here at Arlington, row after row of headstones, aligned in silent formation, reminds us of the high cost of our freedom. Almost a quarter of a million Americans rest here alone, from every war since the Revolution. Among them are many names we know: General Pershing, Audie Murphy, General Marshall, and so many others. But far more numerous are the Americans whose names are not famous, whose lives were not legend but whose deeds were the backbone that secured our Nation's liberty. Today we honor them. We honor them all as heroes, those who are buried here and those who are buried all around the Nation and the world.

If you look at the headstones, they don't tell you whether the people buried there are poor or rich. They make no distinction of race or of age or of condition. They simply stand, each of them, for one American. Each reminds us that we are descendants, whatever our differences, of a common creed, unbeatable when we are united: one nation under God.

Fifty years ago, the world learned just what Americans are capable of when we joined in common cause in World War II. Later this week it will be my great honor to represent our Nation in Europe at the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the World War II campaigns at Normandy and in Italy.

World War II was an era of sacrifice unequalled in our own history. Over 400,000 Americans died in the service of our Nation. At D-Day alone, over 5,200 were killed or wounded in Normandy. But the battle that was fought there was not just between two armies; it was, as clearly as any conflict in all of human history, a battle between two ways of life.

The totalitarians whose tanks had overrun so much of the earth honestly believed democracies were too undisciplined to survive. Hitler believed a free people would never muster the unity of purpose to win the Second World War. But in the chaos of battle, it was the independence and the can-do confidence of the sons and daughters of America and the other democracies that won the day. And all across our Nation, in factories and

farms and hospitals and blood banks, it was the energies of free people who turned the tide. General Eisenhower called it then "the fury of an aroused democracy," the self-reliant fury that took Omaha Beach and liberated much of the Continent and, within a year, brought the war in Europe to an end.

Today, too many of our youngest Americans know too little about what the heroes of that war did. The children and grandchildren of that generation have not been taught enough about the meaning of Normandy or Anzio or Guadalcanal or Midway. And that's why the commemorative ceremonies this year are so very important to all of us: To honor, we must remember.

Today somewhere in America, a curious child rummaging through an attic will stumble upon his grandfather's insignia patches, a pocket guide to France, a metal cricket, a black-and-white photo of a smiling young man in uniform. But learning about those times and those deeds must be more than accidental.

Fortunately, many of our fellow Americans understand that. Gail Thomas of Brentwood, Missouri, was one of them. Her parents both served in World War II. She's a librarian at the Mark Twain Elementary School in her community, and every year she brings in veterans of D-Day and other battles to speak to the students. She says the kids can't believe what those gray-haired men did when they were young. Then they understand that America is the way it is today because of what people gave up 50 years ago. That is the lesson we must all remember, not only for the veterans of World War II but for all our veterans on Memorial Day, on Veterans Day, and every day.

The American veterans of World War II, though they fought in a terribly destructive conflict, at heart were builders. When they came home, they laid down the ribbons of interstate highways across this land. And through the GI bill, those who had fought and won the war were educated so they could win the fruits of victory in peaceful cooperation. In countries ravaged by war, they helped to lift cities from rubble to renewal. They created the international institutions that have undergirded our security for a half a century.

Now our generation honors them for what they did 50 years ago, knowing full well that the greatest honor we can give is to build for the future ourselves at home and abroad: revitalizing our economy so that our people can live to their fullest capacities; strengthening the fabric of our communities and our families; putting our children first and giving them the values they need to do well in a difficult world; making our Government work for all the people, for it took all the people to win the Second World War and to keep this country going forward.

In this uncertain world, we must also remain vigilant against new threats. Today American men and women in uniform stand sentry all around the globe, in Europe, in the Adriatic, in Korea, and on bases here at home. They are the finest, best trained, best motivated fighting force the world has ever known. And our highest commitment must be to ensure that they remain exactly that. If they must be sent in harm's way, we owe them the support they need and deserve.

On this day, we honor those who died for our country. But let us also hold a special place for all of our living American veterans. We owe them a lasting debt of gratitude, and their well-being must be always the cause of our common concern. And let us recognize again our solemn obligation to find answers for those whose loved ones served but were never accounted for.

A year ago today, just before I came to this hallowed place, I spoke at the Vietnam Memorial to honor those who died in that war. I was proud to be joined there by a remarkable man who became a friend of mine, Lewis Puller, Jr. This year, as virtually all of you must know, he rests here on this holy place. This morning when I got up I thought of Lew Puller and the countless heroes he has joined and the terrible sacrifices men and women had been willing to make for this great land.

Every one of them, no matter what war they served in or what battlefield they died on, every one helped to build a nation we love. Let us remember them. Let us pray for their souls and those of their families and resolve to carry on the never-finished work of freedom.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to World War II veteran Elizabeth P. McIntosh, and Katy Daley, master of ceremonies.

**Proclamation 6697—D-Day National Remembrance Day and Time for the National Observance of the Fiftieth Anniversary of World War II, 1994**  
*May 30, 1994*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Fifty years ago on June 6, 1944, the largest armada of land, sea, and air forces ever assembled embarked on a great crusade across the English Channel to free the European continent of a tyranny that had taken hold and threatened to strangle the very freedoms we cherish most. Over 5,000 ships and 10,000 aircraft carried more than 130,000 soldiers, sailors, and airmen from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Poland, France, Norway, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, New Zealand, Australia, Luxembourg, and Belgium to the shores of Normandy. More than 9,000 Americans never returned.

D-Day was considered crucial not only by the Allies, but also by the Axis powers. Field Marshall Irwin Rommel, commander of the enemy forces in the area, dubbed the first 24 hours as “The Longest Day,” referring to the fact that if the Allies were successful in establishing a beachhead, many more units would follow, overwhelming the enemy in the West. However, for the Allied forces, June 6, 1944, was truly “The Longest Day” for a different reason. For the men who landed on the beaches that fateful day, each minute of combat was like an eternity as they were continuously bombarded by the unyielding Nazi forces.

But the enemy was unsuccessful, as the Allied forces had more than just their will to win urging them on. As defenders of justice, they were driven by the desire to restore the peace and freedom that the Nazi occupation had denied to millions of people. Anne Frank wrote of the impending invasion in her diary:

“It’s no exaggeration to say that all Amsterdam, all Holland, yes the whole west coast of Europe, right down to Spain, talks about the invasion day and night, debates about it, and makes bets on it and—hopes . . . The best part of the invasion is that I have the feeling that friends are approaching. We have been oppressed by those terrible Nazis for so long, they have their knives at our throats, that the thought of friends and delivery fills me with confidence.”

For Anne Frank, that deliverance never came, for she died in a concentration camp just months before the end of the war. But millions of others were delivered from oppression and fear. Those who landed on the beaches of Normandy, not only on D-Day but also throughout the rest of the war, were responsible for the liberation of many of the concentration camps as well as cities, towns, and villages throughout Europe that had suffered for so many years.

Thus, 1944 was a year of triumphs and sorrows. The Allies made great advances in bringing liberty to millions, while families and friends on the home front, faced with the knowledge that many of their loved ones would not return, continued to build the “Arsenal of Democracy.”

It is to those millions of American men and women, veterans and civilians, those who came home from the war and those who made the ultimate sacrifice that we say “a grateful Nation remembers.” We must never forget the high price paid by the valiant to ensure the freedoms of the many.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 303, has designated June 6, 1994, as “D-Day National Remembrance Day.”

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 6, 1994, as D-Day National Remembrance Day, and May 30, 1994, through June 6, 1994, as a Time for the National Observance of the Fiftieth Anniversary of World War II. I call upon all Americans to observe this period with appropriate programs and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year